

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2253

Introduced by Assembly Member Coto

(Principal coauthors: Assembly Members Jeffries and Solorio)

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Bill Berryhill, Tom Berryhill, Blumenfield, Chesbro, Cook, Fletcher, Fuentes, Hagman, Lieu, Mendoza, Nava, Portantino, Salas, and Villines)

(Coauthors: Senators Corbett, DeSaulnier, and Price)

February 18, 2010

An act to amend Section 3212.1 of the Labor Code, relating to workers' compensation.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2253, as introduced, Coto. Workers' compensation: cancer presumption.

Existing law establishes a workers' compensation system, administered by the Administrative Director of the Division of Workers' Compensation, to compensate an employee for injuries sustained in the course of his or her employment. Existing law requires an employer to provide, or pay for all reasonable costs of, medical services necessary to care for or relieve work-related injuries. Existing law further provides that in the case of active firefighting members of certain state and local fire departments and in the case of certain peace officers, a compensable injury includes cancer that develops or manifests itself during the period when the firefighter or peace officer demonstrates that he or she was exposed, while in the service of the public agency, to a known carcinogen, as defined, and the carcinogen is reasonably linked to the disabling cancer. Existing law establishes a presumption that the cancer in these cases is presumed to arise out of, and in the course of,

employment, unless the presumption is controverted by evidence that the primary site of the cancer has been established and that the carcinogen to which the member has demonstrated exposure is not reasonably linked to the disabling cancer.

Existing law extends this presumption to a member following termination of service for a period of 3 calendar months for each full year of the requisite service, but not to exceed 60 months in any circumstance, commencing with the last date actually worked in the specified capacity.

This bill would, instead, extend the presumption to a member following termination of service for a period of one year for each full year of the requisite service, but not to exceed 180 months in any circumstance, commencing with the last date actually worked in the specified capacity.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the
- 2 following:
- 3 (a) A person's risk of developing a particular cancer is
- 4 influenced by a combination of factors, including exposure to
- 5 cancer-causing agents in their environment and, in particular, in
- 6 their workplace. In many cases, these factors may act together or
- 7 in sequence to cause cancer.
- 8 (b) In the course of performing their job-related duties,
- 9 firefighters and other public safety personnel routinely come into
- 10 contact with materials known to cause various types of cancer.
- 11 (c) California's existing public safety cancer presumption statute
- 12 is extended for a period of three calendar months for each full year
- 13 of service that an eligible public safety officer worked, not to
- 14 exceed 60 months beyond the cancer-stricken officer's last day of
- 15 service.
- 16 (d) Since the original public safety cancer presumption statute
- 17 was enacted nearly three decades ago, research has revealed that
- 18 latency periods for some industrially caused cancers can be 10
- 19 years or as long as 30 years or more. Therefore, cancers diagnosed
- 20 today are being associated with genetic changes that occurred in

1 the cells due to cancer-causing exposures several years, if not
2 decades, prior to the diagnosis.

3 (e) Other states, including New Hampshire, Rhode Island,
4 Vermont, and Wisconsin, recognize the existence of prolonged
5 cancer latency periods and have extended safeguards to their
6 respective public safety personnel that more appropriately reflect
7 these periods.

8 (f) Given the complex synergistic effects of multiple compound
9 exposures, as well as the rapidly growing introduction of new
10 chemicals and industrial compounds into the environment in which
11 our state's public safety officers work each day while protecting
12 the lives and property of the citizens of this great state, it is most
13 appropriate that the public safety cancer presumption statute of
14 limitations be extended with a sense of urgency.

15 SEC. 2. Section 3212.1 of the Labor Code is amended to read:

16 3212.1. (a) This section applies to all of the following:

17 (1) Active firefighting members, whether volunteers, partly
18 paid, or fully paid, of all of the following fire departments:

19 (A) A fire department of a city, county, city and county, district,
20 or other public or municipal corporation or political subdivision.

21 (B) A fire department of the University of California and the
22 California State University.

23 (C) The Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

24 (D) A county forestry or firefighting department or unit.

25 (2) Active firefighting members of a fire department that serves
26 a United States Department of Defense installation and who are
27 certified by the Department of Defense as meeting its standards
28 for firefighters.

29 (3) Peace officers, as defined in Section 830.1, subdivision (a)
30 of Section 830.2, and subdivisions (a) and (b) of Section 830.37,
31 of the Penal Code, who are primarily engaged in active law
32 enforcement activities.

33 (4) (A) Fire and rescue services coordinators who work for the
34 Office of Emergency Services.

35 (B) For purposes of this paragraph, "fire and rescue services
36 coordinator" means a coordinator with any of the following job
37 classifications: coordinator, senior coordinator, or chief
38 coordinator.

39 (b) The term "injury," as used in this division, includes cancer,
40 including leukemia, that develops or manifests itself during a period

1 in which any member described in subdivision (a) is in the service
2 of the department or unit, if the member demonstrates that he or
3 she was exposed, while in the service of the department or unit,
4 to a known carcinogen as defined by the International Agency for
5 Research on Cancer, or as defined by the director.

6 (c) The compensation that is awarded for cancer shall include
7 full hospital, surgical, medical treatment, disability indemnity, and
8 death benefits, as provided by this division.

9 (d) The cancer so developing or manifesting itself in these cases
10 shall be presumed to arise out of and in the course of the
11 employment. This presumption is disputable and may be
12 controverted by evidence that the primary site of the cancer has
13 been established and that the carcinogen to which the member has
14 demonstrated exposure is not reasonably linked to the disabling
15 cancer. Unless so controverted, the appeals board is bound to find
16 in accordance with the presumption. This presumption shall be
17 extended to a member following termination of service for a period
18 of ~~three calendar months~~ *one year* for each full year of the requisite
19 service, but not to exceed ~~60~~ 180 months in any circumstance,
20 commencing with the last date actually worked in the specified
21 capacity.

22 (e) The amendments to this section enacted during the 1999
23 portion of the 1999–2000 Regular Session shall be applied to
24 claims for benefits filed or pending on or after January 1, 1997,
25 including, but not limited to, claims for benefits filed on or after
26 that date that have previously been denied, or that are being
27 appealed following denial.

28 (f) *This section shall be known, and may be cited, as the William*
29 *Dallas Jones Cancer Presumption Act of 2010.*